

## Audit Committee – Committee Self-Assessment Summary 2021-22

Establishment, Composition, Organisation, Resources, Duties		Strong	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Comments
1	The audit committee terms of reference clearly, adequately & realistically set out the Committee's role and nature and scope of its responsibilities in accordance with the Department of Health and Social Care guidance and have been approved by the Committee and the full Board of Directors.	X			ToR setting out scope & role of Committee approved by Committee 18/02/21 and Board 01/04/2021
2	The Board was active in its consideration of Audit Committee composition, including the designation or consideration of an "audit committee financial expert." (At least one committee member should have a financial background).	X			In 2021/22 membership has included a qualified financial expert and an experience audit committee NED as Chair
3	The Audit Committee's actions reflect independence from management, ethical behavior, adherence to good practice guidance and the best interests of the Trust and its stakeholders.	X			
4	The Audit Committee reports to the Board of Directors (throughout the year and in its annual report) demonstrate compliance with its terms of reference and provides the Board of Directors with assurance on the effective operation of systems and procedures within the Trust.	X			Minutes and the Chair's report are reviewed by the Board after each meeting with key issues escalated. Annual Report & Accounts; Quality Accounts; Charity Annual Report and Accounts are approved by the Board supported by recommendations from the Audit Committee.

Establishment, Composition, Organisation, Resources, Duties		Yes	No	Comments
5	Are the terms of reference reviewed annually to take into account governance developments (including integrated governance principles) and the remit of other Committees within the organisation?	X		Terms of reference are reviewed annually. Committee reporting/planning processes provide oversight and links with other committees.
6	Are changes to the Committee's current and future workload discussed and approved at Board level?	X		The Committee work plan taken to Board as a part of annual report.  The Committee noted that Covid-19 has impacted on the pace of work during 2021/22.
7	Are Committee members independent of the management team?	X		

Agenda Management, Oversight of the Financial Reporting Process, Compliance with the Law and Regulations governing the NHS and Internal Control	Yes	No	Comments

8	Is the Committee's role in the approval of the Annual Accounts clearly defined and complementary to the Board of Directors?	X		Duties and delegated authority set out in ToR.
9	Does the Board of Directors ensure that Committee members have sufficient knowledge of the organisation to identify key risks and to challenge both line management and auditors on critical and/or sensitive matters?	X		<p>Selection process for NEDs includes assessment of appropriate experience/skills and NEDs are appointed to contribute to through individual portfolios.</p> <p>Financially qualified and experienced NEDs appointed to Audit Committee.</p> <p>NED Training/development attended:  NHS Providers Governance &amp; Quality Forum - May 2021  NHSE/I Audit &amp; Finance Forum - November 2021  NHS Providers NED Network February 2022</p> <p><i>*The Board had established a regular learning together programme (currently limited programme) to ensure there is development of knowledge across a broad range of areas including BAF, Information Governance, safeguarding and whistleblowing.</i></p> <p><i>*The NED Buddy programme builds knowledge of the organisation; divisional presentations at Committee level enhance member's knowledge of the Trust.</i></p> <p><i>*The two programmes noted above have been largely on hold during the COVID pandemic.</i></p> <p>In 2021 the Trust extended their weekly clinical rounds to become 'Visibility Rounds' that Board members were invited to join. These provide a structured timetable that includes focused topics, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shadowing/Step in my shoes</li> <li>• Staff Wellbeing</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality Round</li> <li>• Environment Round</li> <li>• 15 Steps</li> <li>• Focus on – for example infection control, medicine safety, patient experience</li> <li>• Twilight Shift</li> </ul>
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Oversight of Audit Processes		Strong	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Comments
10	There is appropriate consideration of independent assurance reports (from a variety of sources), management response, and improvement actions. The Board of Directors is clearly sighted on the issues that arise which require action by the organisation.	x			The Committee receives assurance reports from internal audit (BDO) and external audit (KPMG). It receives reports from management teams and counter fraud services and is able to triangulate information provided to it.

Overall Evaluation		Strong	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Comments
12	What is the overall assessment of the performance of the Audit Committee?	X			

<p><b>Additional Comments:</b></p> <p>Audit Committee areas for focus 2022/23:</p> <p>The Committee felt that there could be a greater focus on quality in how the Audit Committee agenda was set and agreed that we would consider a section on quality, data quality and performance &amp; financial control.</p> <p>The Committee considered setting annual objectives and whether it would be helpful for the Board to consider this across. EA and IA colleagues provided feedback that this was usually addressed through Committee ToR and the use of forward plans to ensure that sufficient time was allowed to complete tasks. It was agreed that this request and discussion would be noted in the feedback to Board.</p>
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